

American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund

Ensuring Broad and Diverse Stakeholder Engagement

May 6, 2021



American Rescue Plan “ESSER” Overview

- Nearly \$122 billion to states and school districts
- Help safely reopen and sustain safe operations, maximizing in-person instruction
- Address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Nation’s students



The Opportunity

- Providing more safe in-person learning opportunities for students quickly
- Supporting students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs
- Addressing the educational inequities that were exacerbated by the pandemic
- Bringing to the table the voices of those who can best speak to how to meet these goals at the state and LEA levels
- Promoting accountability, transparency, and effective use of funds



Commitment to Underserved Students

- Students from low-income families
- Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity)
- Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender)
- English learners
- Children with disabilities
- Students experiencing homelessness
- Children and youth in foster care
- Migratory students
- Other groups disproportionately impacted by the pandemic that have been identified by the State educational agency (SEA) (e.g., youth involved in the criminal justice system, students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years, students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures, and LGBTQ+ students)



Funding for States

- A state must reserve:
 - At least 5 percent of its total ARP ESSER allocation for the implementation of **evidence-based interventions aimed specifically at addressing the academic impact of lost instructional time**, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs
 - At least 1 percent of its total ARP ESSER allocation for **evidence-based summer enrichment programs**
 - At least 1 percent of its total ARP ESSER allocation for **evidence-based comprehensive afterschool programs**
- These interventions must:
 - Respond to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs
 - Address the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on underserved groups of students



Funding for School Districts

- At least 90 percent of each state's total ARP ESSER allocation must be subgranted to LEAs that receive Title I, Part A funds
- Each LEA is required to reserve **at least 20 percent of its ARP ESSER funds to address the academic impact of lost instructional time** through evidence-based interventions that respond to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs and address the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on underserved groups of students
- LEAs may use the remaining funds for a broad range of purposes to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the pandemic



State Plans

- **State Plan applications** must describe planned uses of ARP ESSER funds and strategies to support school districts
- The applications must address seven areas:
 1. Describing the state's current status and needs
 2. Safely reopening schools and sustaining their safe operations
 3. Planning for the use and coordination of ARP ESSER funds
 4. Maximizing state-level funds to support students
 5. Supporting LEAs in planning for and meeting students' needs
 6. Supporting the educator workforce
 7. Monitoring and measuring progress



School District Plans

- **School district** plans for the use of ARP ESSER funds must address:
 - The extent to which and how funds will be used to implement prevention strategies consistent, to the greatest extent practicable, with CDC guidance on reopening schools
 - How the LEA will use the funds required to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through evidence-based interventions
 - How the LEA will spend its remaining funds
 - How the LEA will ensure that its interventions respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students, and particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic
- School districts are also required to develop and post plans for the **safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services**



Ensuring Broad Public Input on the Use of Funds

- Students
- Families
- Tribes (if applicable)
- Civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations)
- School and district administrators (including special education administrators)
- Superintendents
- Charter school leaders (if applicable)
- Teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions
- Stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students



Promoting Thoughtful and Timely Use of Funds

- March 11 – American Rescue Plan Act enacted
- March 17 – State allocations announced
- March 24 – States received access to two-thirds of ARP ESSER funds, totaling \$81 billion
- April 21 – ARP ESSER State Plan application template and interim final requirements released
- June 7 – Deadline for submitting ARP ESSER State Plan applications
- Timeline for LEA plans for use of ARP ESSER funds is established by each state; must be reasonable and should be within no later than 90 days after the LEA receives its ARP ESSER allocation



Additional Resources

- Visit **ed.gov** for:
 - The State Plan application template
 - How much funding each state is receiving
 - Guidance on requirements like “maintenance of effort,” which ensures states continue to fulfill their commitment to education funding
 - The *COVID-19 Handbook, Volume 1: Strategies for Safely Reopening Elementary and Secondary Schools*, which focuses on health and safety measures that schools can use to successfully implement the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) K-12 Operational Strategy
 - The *COVID-19 Handbook, Volume 2: Roadmap to Reopening Safely and Meeting All Students’ Needs*, describing strategies for safely reopening all of America’s schools and promoting educational equity by addressing opportunity gaps that have been exacerbated by the pandemic
 - The Safer Schools & Campuses Best Practices Clearinghouse



Additional Resources – Coming Soon

- FAQs on Civil Rights and School Reopening to help students, families, schools, and the public support all students' rights in educational environments, including in elementary and secondary schools and postsecondary institutions, during the COVID-19 pandemic, which will describe:
 - Protections against discrimination for students with disabilities
 - Protections for students against discrimination based on race, color, and national origin
 - Protections for students against sex discrimination, including sexual and gender-based harassment
- Guidance on the American Rescue Plan's "maintenance of equity" requirement, which protects schools and school districts that serve the students with the greatest needs from disproportionate budget cuts



Questions and Discussion

